

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 212081

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 212081

EXDIS

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TAGS: SNAR, TH, BM, TW

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH FRENCH AUTHOR ON NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING

1. AT HIS REQUEST, DEPARTMENT OFFICERS MET WITH FRENCH AUTHOR MICHEL LAMBERTI ON OCTOBER 25 CONCERNING HIS FORTH-COMING BOOK ON "HISTORY OF KMT" WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THEIR ACTIVITIES IN GOLDEN TRIANGLE AREA. LAMBERTI AND COLLABORATOR CATHERINE LAMOUR ARE AUTHORS OF BOOK ENTITLED LES GRANDES MANOEUVRES DE L'OPIUM, PUBLISHED IN 1972, WHICH WILL BE RE-ISSUED IN ENGLISH EDITION BY PANTHEON THIS NOVEMBER. LAMBERTI CLAIMS THAT PUBLISHER INTERESTED HIM IN WRITING FULLER ACCOUNT OF KMT ACTIVITIES AND THAT, THEREFORE FOR PAST YEAR OR SO HAS BEEN GATHERING DATA FOR ANOTHER BOOK DURING VISITS TO BURMA, THAILAND, LAOS AND TAIWAN. LAMOUR, HE STATED, WENT TO BURMA (TRAVELLED AS FAR AS TAUNGGYI) EARLY THIS YEAR WHILE HE WENT TO THAILAND THIS MARCH AND AUGUST AND ALSO TO TAIWAN FOR SIX WEEKS. LAMBERTI CLAIMS CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 212081

TO HAVE CROSSED INTO BURMA FOR A FEW DAYS WITH SHAN STATE ARMY FORCES AT THAM NGOP DIRECTLY NORTH OF CHIANG MAI IN FANG DISTRICT. DURING NINETY-MINUTE CONVERSATION, LAMBERTI PROVED TO BE HIGHLY KNOWLEDGEABLE ON NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING,

LEADERSHIP AND ACTIVITIES OF SHAN STATE INSURGENT FORCES,
US AND THAI PROGRAMS IN AREA AND PRC-SUPPORTED BCP INROADS
IN NORTHEASTERN BURMA.

2. FOLLOWING ARE OTHER HIGHLIGHTS OF MEETING:

(A) REGARDING SSA, LAMBERTI SAID HE MET LEADERS OF "BOTH FACTIONS"-- SAO SEUNG SUK WHO "CONTROLS" AREA WEST OF SALWEEN AND U MIEN (ONE OF SEVERAL NAMES), SON OF FIRST PRESIDENT OF BURMA (SAO SHWE THAIK), WHO "CONTROLS" AREA EAST OF SALWEEN. ((COMMENT: EXISTENCE OF TWO SSA FACTIONS UNKNOWN TO DEPARTMENT BUT LAMBERTI INSISTED THAT SSA IS DIVIDED THIS WAY PRIMARILY FOR OPERATIONAL REASONS.) STATED THAT SSA, WHILE NOT POSSESSING IMPRESSIVE MILITARY UNITS OR EQUIPMENT, HAD EXCELLENT RADIO NETWORK AND FULL KNOWLEDGE OF ACTIVITIES IN NORTHEASTERN BURMA. NOTED THAT SSA PARTICULARLY CONCERNED NOW BY PRESSURES AGAINST THEM STEMMING FROM CURRENT GUB-BCP FIGHTING.

(B) FURTHER ON SSA, LAMBERTI ASSERTED THAT SSA LEADERS TOLD HIM ABOUT LO HSING-HAN'S PROPOSALS TO US LAST YEAR. LAMBERTI ASKED ABOUT IDENTITY OF "BILL EDWARDS" AND "WONSEK" SAYING FORMER WAS CIA MAN FROM SINGAPORE AND LATTER WAS BNDD MAN. PRESSED FOR NAME OF DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVE ATTENDING MEETING IN CHIANG MAI AND WANTED TO KNOW WHY LO'S OFFER WAS NOT ACCEPTED. (COMMENT: WE DEMURRED IN CONFIRMING THIS INFORMATION SAYING ONLY THAT DETAILS OF MEETING WERE HANDLED LOCALLY; OBVIOUS, HOWEVER, THAT LO'S PROPOSALS WILL NOW BECOME PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE.)

(C) REGARDING CIF ACTIVITIES, LAMBERTI PROFESSED DETAILED KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR OPERATIONS, INCLUDING ALLEGED OFFICIAL CONNECTIONS WITH TAIWAN. SAID GENERAL TUAN HAD THAI PASSPORT, THAT HE TRAVELLED FREQUENTLY TO TAIWAN AND THAT TUAN'S FATHER RECENTLY VISITED GOLDEN TRIANGLE. SAID ALSO THAT, WHILE IN TAIWAN, HE MET EX-CIF SOLDIERS WHO MAINTAIN FREQUENT CONTACT WITH FORMER ASSOCIATES AND THAT CIF CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 212081

PERSONNEL IN THAILAND REGULARLY TRAVEL TO TAIWAN. ADDED THAT GENERAL LI HAS SON STUDYING IN US. ASKED SPECIFICALLY ABOUT US ROLE IN CIF SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT INVOLVING BURNING OF 26 TONS OF OPIUM; MENTIONED HE HAD SEEN PHOTO IN CIF GENERAL'S HOME OF US-THAI-CIF OFFICIALS ALLEGEDLY INVOLVED IN NEGOTIATIONS. BELIEVED THAT USUAL REASON GIVEN FOR THAI PROTECTION OF CIF, NAMELY THAT THEY ARE BUFFER AGAINST COMMUNIST INSURGENTS, IS FALLACIOUS AND THAT CIF FORCES THEMSELVES STIR UP TROUBLE AMONG HILLTRIBES IN ORDER TO GAIN SUPPORT OF RTG. IN THIS CONNECTION, CLAIMED THAT GEN. KRIANGSAK IS RUMORED TO BE PROTECTING CIF IN RETURN FOR KICKBACKS.

(D) REGARDING IBMND, LAMBERTI CLAIMED THAT THERE WAS INTIMATE LINK BETWEEN THEM AND CIF. REFERRED TO IBMND OPERATIVE IN THAILAND, WITH COVER AS JOURNALIST, WHO MAINTAINS REGULAR CONTACT WITH CIF.

(E) REGARDING BCP ACTIVITIES, LAMBERTI SAID IT IS GENERALLY ACKNOWLEDGED BY ALL HIS CONTACTS THAT BCP FORCES ARE HEAVILY SUPPORTED BY MAINLAND CHINA AND THAT THEY HAVE OBJECTIVE OF CONTROLLING ENTIRE AREA EAST OF SALWEEN DOWN TO AND INCLUDING KENG TUNG. LAMBERTI OFFERED NO EXPLANATION FOR PRC SUPPORT EXCEPT USUAL REASON OF IDEOLOGICAL COMMITMENT TO LIBERATION MOVEMENTS SUCH AS BCP. ASSERTED ALSO THAT BCP UNITS ARE BUYING OPIUM CROP IN AREAS UNDER THEIR CONTROL, PART OF WHICH IS SHIPPED TO CHINA FOR MEDICINAL PURPOSES AND REMAINDER SOLD TO FAVORED SMALL TRADERS MARKETING PRODUCT IN THAILAND.

3. LAMBERTI ALSO REFERRED TO OTHER EUROPEANS GATHERING INFORMATION ON SSA AND OPIUM-RELATED ACTIVITIES IN GOLDEN TRIANGLE AREA. IDENTIFIED ADRIAN COWELL, WHOM HE KNEW WELL, AND SAID COWELL IS CURRENTLY HAVING FULL-LENGTH COLOR FILM DEVELOPED AND EDITED IN LONDON WHICH PROVIDES UNUSUAL PHOTOGRAPHIC COVERAGE OF OPIUM GROWING, REFINING AND TRAFFICKING. ALSO REFERRED TO UNIDENTIFIED GERMAN JOURNALIST WHO TOOK PHOTOS OF SSA LEADERS AND THEIR ACTIVITIES AND THEN ALLEGEDLY TURNED INFORMATION OVER TO GUB. FOR THIS REASON, SSA NOW RETICENT TO PERMIT WESTERNERS TO ACCOMPANY THEIR CARAVANS OR COVER THEIR ACTIVITIES. LAMBERTI INCIDENTALLY NOTED THAT HE POSSESSES OWN FILM ON CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 STATE 212081

SSA ACTIVITIES, BUT DID NOT BRING TO UNITED STATES.

4. ABOVE PROVIDED FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND ANY COMMENTS ADDRESSEES MAY HAVE ON ACCOUNT PROVIDED BY LAMBERTI. KISSINGER

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